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band will send a whale's tooth for her to return and her relatives will make a feast to send her back with; this feast is called the conveyance (*i kaukau*). 593

A woman becomes of the clan of her husband. Only women are transferred; men stay. In practice a woman works with her husband's clan, but upon being asked to what clan she belongs, she will name that in which she was born. On her husband's death a woman returns to her original clan. Sometimes a man goes to live in his wife's country. It is then said that "she brought him over." 614

The wife goes to the home of her parents to give birth to her children, and usually remains with them for a year or longer after a child is born. During this time she may not resume cohabitation with her husband. It is said that a Fijian woman will die if she is pregnant three times, each time before the previous child is strong. A Fijian widow whose wife has died in childbirth is looked upon askance. If a woman contracts the abdominal disease called *ndrami ni tangane*, which is caused by the husband cohabiting too soon after childbirth, and if she dies in consequence people will dissuade girls from marrying him. 744 753

Birth Ceremonial

A first child, called a new child (*ngone vou*) is the occasion for much more ceremony than attends the birth of subsequent children. There is no feast when conception first appears, but the mother stays in the house, for a number of months given variously as three, four, five, six, or eight; she does not cut her hair or bathe. She is taken care of during her pregnancy lest the foetus move and miscarry. This is done for the eldest child only. After eight months her people make an oven on the shore and she goes to fish. A feast called the bathing of the pregnant mother (*i silisili ni mbukete*) is prepared, at which the fish she catches are roasted and served, called *i tatavu*. The people of Levuka called this feast "causing to appear" (*vakavotu*). The prospective mother then cuts her hair and throws it away, after which she may resume hard work. 343

A pregnant woman may not anoint another person's eyes with medicine as it causes soreness of the eyes. 753

Except for the child of the High Chief a man may be present at the birth, but usually only the father is. It is forbidden to announce the approach of travail in the village or the labor will be difficult. The after-birth is buried. The newborn child is bathed. The child is not again bathed until the fourth day. 844

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the affected arm. The leech gave a pillow and a mat to the Tongan woman who taught her. The disease may be produced by witchcraft.

Lolokumete.—All the organs of the body pain; sometimes internal discharges occur, which are fatal; sometimes external pus does not appear until after four or five months. It can be produced by witchcraft.

If a person is ill with this disease and the owner of the cure cannot attend, he will say, "Go and tell the patient I cannot go. If it is my disease, when you get there he will find relief; if it is not mine he will not be relieved." As he speaks, the patient recovers. The leech also touches and so knows whether it is his disease.

Treatment for Pregnancy and Birth [23]

Pregnancy is called *mbukete*. Medicines (*wai*) to produce children are called *wai ni luvea*; in some of them the *vativati* fern is used. "It varies," says one wise woman "in the case of abdominal pains. Some women who have no children merely 'bathe' (*sili*) [p. 162] in order to turn the uterus the right way, because hard work such as fishing and carrying burdens turns the path of the child. The test [? efficiency: *i vakandinandina*] is my hand." After this treatment the woman may use a medicine called *wai ni nda*.

Scrape one stick each of *waleanggio* and *roroworo;* wrap the scrapings in the reticulum of a coconut palm, soak in water, squeeze; give to drink. If the remedy fails, the following is tried: scrape the bark off a branch of lemon tree, make an infusion, and give to the patient to drink; cut up fine a leaf of *makota* and with it rub the belly; this is the ointment. Only the wife drinks.

A foetus is in the early stages described as "blood." A distinction is made between abortions which are called *lutundra* (fallen as blood) and miscarriages, described as "the child has fallen." In Mba I was told the first term was used when the foetus was anything up to five months old.

Abortion is procured, but details are hard to obtain, as the practice is now a criminal offence. It is called "causing to fall," also "child-pricking," "pricking in the belly." These terms sufficiently express the method. Formerly it was very common. The people of Wathiwathi used to destroy the children of all their women who married into Tumbou so that they should have no *vasu*, that is sister's sons (p. 40) to be a burden upon them.

After eight months pregnancy a woman is given a slippery medicine called *wai ni kuita kumbe*, octopus of the atlantoid membrane. The disease appears "in the path of the child." It makes the membrane hard and spreads round the waist.[24] The medicine makes it easy to detach the membrane and for the child to be born.

Treatment.—Scrape together one stick of *ronga* and one of *ennerru*, make an infusion for the patient to drink.

[23] For the medical terms of this chapter I am indebted to Dr. W. MacDougall.

[24] The membrane gets hard in parts and is liable to stick in consequence of syphilis. Dr. B. G. Corney writes that he has never met with a case of syphilis in a native Fijian; and there is no authentic case on record. Adhesion of the placenta may, he thinks, be the consequence of yaws which is a close relation of syphilis.

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When the placenta, or "seat of the child" as it is called, appears the midwife anoints her hand with oil, rubs the membrane and finally detaches it carefully. A person who does not know pulls and tears it, and if the membrane is torn the mother dies. The umbilical cord is bandaged and cut off with scissors; formerly it was not bandaged and a bamboo knife was used.

The following cure is used if a woman bears a child and her belly aches:

First, the leech uses a test medicine consisting of an infusion made with four leaves of *vativati* which is given to drink and used to rub the belly. The prohibitions connected with it are sweet food and sea water. The patient is eased, then has tremendous pains, then feels easy again. The leech is then informed that the patient is better and supplies the substance of the cure: one stem of *wavula*, and two shoots of reeds, one tuber of *vativati*, four leaves of *vativati* made into an infusion and drunk. This is repeated four days after which the patient bathes.

The length of the confinement depends on the time of baptism; the mother lies in till then, it may be for months. She is covered with a blanket. Her diet consists of taro stems because it is soft food. The mother eats three or four times a day and twice at night to make the milk abundant. She may not eat pig or sweet food for one or two months till the child is strong lest the mother contract *ndrami*. She may not eat food from the sea for four days, or drink coconut for some time.

Treatment for travail (*wai ni taratara*):

Many leaves of *ale*, and some of *se ni toa* and lemon leaves; when the woman is in travail pound them together, strain them in the usual way and give it her to drink. The *Hibiscus* is used because its juice is viscous, in order that the child may slip. If parturition is hard they continue giving medicine. If these medicines fail, after two nights recourse is made to a spirit-expelling Tahitian medicine (*wai vakataiti*).

Possession

A very popular class of remedies is that called *taiti* remedies. They are known to have been introduced by the Tahitian missionaries, hence the name. They are now used to expel spirits, though one wise woman says this is not the right meaning. "The cause of *taiti*," says Poasa, "is the souls of the dead or the ancestor spirits." If a spirit hits a man so that he does not know his soul, he is *taiti*. Sometimes before he is in sight, the patient declares the leech is coming, and refuses to have him, saying "the place smells bad," referring to the medicine; he struggles. When the leech arrives, the patient tries to escape. As he is held down, he calls out the names of great grandparents, or forefathers, or Tutumatua, or the Wind Women. I witnessed a case of this nature: A boy was seized with pains in the stomach and was delirious; a spirit was said to be eating him. The boy recognized only one man; and complained the spirit had pinched him. A pupil of Ratu, the Levuka man who leads the "Children of Water" came

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but was done because the chief likes Tongan songs. Between rounds of kava, ceremonial presentations were made to the chief. These were two large pieces of Tongan tapa (called *i vaka mamatha*), two canoes, four turtles, and two large mats. Six kava bowls, to be sent by the chief from the Kambara people to the council of chiefs, were prepared for shipping. Meanwhile a *meke* was danced for the chief's wife by two groups of girls, representing the west and east sides of the island. At the end of the *meke*, the dancers removed their tapa attire and presented it to the chief's wife. This was called the *luvaluva ni meke*. The chief's wife made a return gift of money. Later another whale's tooth was presented by the assistant *mbuli* of Kambara and then a small feast (*i sirovi*) was presented. It consisted of a large fish, fish soup, and sweet potatoes.

Life Crises Ceremonies[4]

Pregnancy

Childbearing is an important social function for both parents. Through childbearing a woman can most successfully increase her social prestige, and women say that the happiest day of their lives is the birthday of their first child. It makes no difference to them whether the child is a boy or a girl. The first-born is the living representative of the ancestor gods and the temporary repository of the clan mana. The attention of the clan is concentrated on him. His conception and birth are marked by elaborate ceremonies, only partially repeated for subsequent offspring.

Conception is known in Lau to be the result of sexual intercourse, but the general opinion is that conception does not occur unless a couple copulates repeatedly. It is believed that a woman who has intercourse with many men will not become pregnant.

On Mothe, the beginning of a woman's first pregnancy is marked by a ceremony called *i vaka votu ni ngonè* or *vaka votu*. The female members of the pregnant woman's clan gather together and her mother paints her entire body with a yellow powder (*rerenga*) made of the mangrove root, which is grated, mixed with water, strained, allowed to settle, drained and dried. This is called *poroporo*. The natives do not know why this is done but say it is an old custom. Four days later the women go fishing in the sea and the yellow powder is washed off. Then a feast for both men and women relatives is held.

During the first one hundred days of pregnancy a woman is a source of danger to the community, a state called *taiwaiwai*, and must observe certain tabus. For instance, she must not go fishing lest the fish break the nets; she must not touch or even look at a turtle net lest no catch be made; she may not touch the food of a sick person lest he grow worse; nor may she bathe in the sea. A small communal fishing catch is usually attributed to the presence

[4] For the development of the child and his induction into group life, see 23, pp. 26-59.

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343 of a *taiwaiwai* woman among the fishers. The woman must not cut her hair lest her strength be sapped. After one hundred days the woman is no longer a source of danger, and is in a state called *kunekune*. Her hair is cut for the first time since she has become pregnant, she bathes in the sea, and takes part in the communal net fishing for the feast which is provided by the relatives of the expectant couple. After fishing, the pregnant woman is rubbed with oil and dressed in her best kilt.

[184] On Fulanga no ceremony is held at the beginning of a first pregnancy, but the *i vaka votu ni ngone* is held after the first one hundred days of the first pregnancy of a married woman. It marks the woman's change of status to *kunekune*. The *vaka votu* ceremonies are held only for a woman's first pregnancy to mark the conception of her *ulu matua* (first-born), but the tabus are observed for all pregnancies.

Both parents observe certain tabus throughout the pregnancy to protect the foetus from harm and insure its growth. They abstain from eating any kind of fish which has been cut into pieces before being cooked, lest the child be born with a disease called *manaka na ika tava*. They must also abstain from eating the following sea foods: *vethu, kai ndawa, tuvu, lailai vai, yalewa matua, ndambe, ulumburu,* and *lolo* (sea eel) lest the foetus be injured.

CHILDBIRTH [5]

344 On the day of birth and for two or three days after birth the mother and child are visited by relatives from the mother's and father's clans. The relatives bring small gifts of roasted ripe coconuts and mats, tapa, or oil. The gifts are presented without ceremony and are received by the paternal grandmother. They are kept by the child's parents.

For at least four nights after the birth a group of five to ten female relatives from both the father's and the mother's sides sleep in the house with the mother and child. This group is called the *songone* or *tonitoni*. When Makarete of Saumua clan, Tokalau, gave birth to a child, the *songone* consisted of the child's maternal grandmother, the maternal aunt, the paternal grandfather's sister, the paternal granduncle's daughter, the paternal aunt, and the paternal uncle's daughter. The child's father must feed the *songone* which stays from four to ten nights depending on his resources.

346 On the fourth day after birth a ceremony called *i silisili ndravu* or *vakanibongiva* is held. The young mother bathes in the sea for the first time since the birth. She is accompanied by her own mother or other near relatives. The *songone* go fishing to secure sea food for a small feast provided for them by the father. On this day the midwife, if she is not a close relative, is presented with property such as tapa or mats. The tapa in which the newborn infant was wrapped at birth is removed for the first time, and the child is

[5] For details concerning childbirth in Lau, see 23, pp. 27-32.

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871 the missionaries and elaborated by the colonial government in Fiji will be discussed in Chapter VII. From infancy children attend the village mission church on Sundays. The influence of the missionaries in Lau will be discussed in Chapter V.

842 593 The ideal in Lau is to produce many offspring, for in the child lies the future of the clan. He is still regarded as the contemporary link in the long human chain connecting the ancestor gods with the unborn. The first child receives particular attention, especially the first born of the highest ranking family in a clan. Even today he is considered the living representative of the clan ancestor gods, and the temporary repository of the clan "mana" or creative power. The attention of the clan is concentrated on him, and his conception and birth are marked by elaborate ceremonies, only partially repeated for subsequent offspring. Although both parents cooperate in child bearing and rearing, these functions are regarded by the Lauans as a woman's main sphere in life, and women say that the happiest day of their lives is the birthday of the first child.

842 The Lauans know that conception is the result of sexual intercourse but the general opinion is that it does not occur unless a couple have connection repeatedly. Only one informant, an old woman, said that conception might take place as the result of one union. It is believed that if a woman has intercourse with several men she will not become pregnant.

843 When a woman knows she is with child, which she determines by cessation of menstruation and the swelling of the breasts, she tells her husband. He is immediately concerned with the problem of finding her some special food, for pregnant women have a craving (known as *lalau*) for raw fruit, sweets, greens, and shellfish. To satisfy this craving a woman will gather shellfish alone (after the fourth month, 843 since before this time fishing is tabu to her), build a small 571 fire, roast them, and eat them by herself. Inasmuch as the

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843 ●

Lauans are practically never alone and do almost everything 571
in groups, this is very unusual.

On Mothe the beginning of a woman's first pregnancy is 843
marked by a ceremony. The female members of the woman's
clan gather together, and her mother paints her entire body [386]
with a yellow powder made of mangrove root. No men are [302]
present. The natives say this is an old custom, but they do
not know why it is done. Four days later the women go
fishing, and the yellow powder is washed off. Then a feast
for both men and women relatives is held, and there is much
joking among the old people about the expectant mother.

Pregnancy is known to last nine months. During the first
100 days the woman is a source of danger to the community,
a state called *taiwaiwai*. For the protection of the group she
must observe certain tabus. She must not go fishing lest the
fish break the nets, and she must not touch or even look
upon a turtle net lest no catch be made. To free it from [783]
any possible contamination a turtle net is smoked before
being used, by means of a fire smothered in green leaves. She
may not touch the food of a sick person lest he grow worse,
nor may she bathe in the sea. Moreover, she may not cut
her hair lest her strength be sapped, for during this time she [302]
usually does not feel well. After the first 100 days the woman
is no longer a source of danger. She is now in a state called
kunekune. On Fulanga this change is marked by a feast.
Her hair is cut, she bathes in the sea, and takes part in the
communal net fishing for the feast which is provided by
the relatives of the expectant couple. After fishing the woman
is rubbed with oil and dressed in her best *lavalava*. These
ceremonies are held only for a married woman's first preg-
nancy, but the tabus are observed for all pregnancies.

To protect the foetus from harm and insure its growth,
both parents observe certain tabus throughout the period of
pregnancy. They abstain from eating all kinds of fish which
have been cut into pieces before being cooked, for otherwise

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843 the body of the new born infant will be covered with sores. They also abstain from eating certain types of sea food lest the foetus be injured. In case of a miscarriage the foetus is kept two nights and then buried in the village cemetery without ceremony.

842 Most of the natives know no contraceptives. The women of Mothe, however, say that if a woman does not want a child she goes to a female doctor who takes her into the lagoon and by manipulating the uterus is able to prevent her from conceiving. When she wishes a child she returns to the medicine woman who, by means of counter-manipulation, replaces the uterus into normal position. Informants say that the withdrawal practise is also known as a means of preventing conception.

847 The natives say that abortion is common among unmarried girls on islands like Mothe where standards of morality are lax. According to informants, it is accomplished between the second and fifth months. Three methods are known: pricking by the insertion of a blade of sharp, stiff grass; hard labor such as carrying heavy loads, jumping, or splitting wood; and drinking an infusion of herbs prescribed by a medicine woman.

844 Childbirth takes place in the sleeping house. No man is present unless the birth is unusually difficult, when the husband occasionally helps. An attempt is made to keep the labor secret in the village and to keep children out of the house. If the labor is prolonged, however, the children of the village gather and watch. As soon as the infant is born they are allowed to enter the house.

When the pains begin the woman in labor bathes in the house. Her mother, mother-in-law, or grandmother acts as [424] midwife and gives her a medicine to facilitate delivery. The recipe for this medicine is an inherited or purchased secret, carefully guarded by the owner. The best midwife on Kambara makes it of beaten hibiscus bark placed in a coconut reticulum bag and steeped in water. A skilled midwife deter-